

THE
NASSAU MONTHLY.

VOL. III.]

MARCH, 1844.

[No. V.]

CAUSES OF HISTORICAL DISCREPANCY.

IN analysing the manifold causes which may have contributed to superinduce the various aspects that different periods in the world's history have presented, no two persons, probably, would arrive at the same determination. Not only would the historical facts collated from the survey of an age, and which form the basis of all historical induction, be vague and contradictory, but from precisely the same events essentially different conclusions would be predicated. This diversity to which we allude, does not respect the truth of the events recorded, or the order of their occurrence, but rather that combined effect, by virtue of which they characterize any ultimate state of society: it is a discussion respecting the cause to which the general aspect, the *tout ensemble*, of an age is to be referred.

Some periods are involved in such mystic obscurity that it is absolutely impossible to develop the great events which stamp them with an impress of their own. In the consideration of such eras, the mind finds nothing to direct its investigations, and is encompassed on all sides with a misty atmosphere, or enveloped in palpable darkness. The historical speculatist, in his devious flight through the dark expanse of antiquity, invidious and incongruous as may seem the comparison, resembles Satan, as represented by Milton, when, "upborne with indefatigable wings" he sought to reach this upper world, and find his uncouth way to "the nearest coast of darkness bordering on light."

"He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,

As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
 Audacious ; but, that seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity : all unawares
 Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops."

We are much accustomed to ridicule that "perverse-ness of the human mind, labouring to explore antiquity," that national vanity, that pride of pedigree, which induced the haughty Roman to claim an origin coeval with the gods—the courtly Athenian to wear a golden grass-hopper as an emblem to express that he "sprang fortuitously from the earth, in ages far beyond the reach of history," and which even now, impels the native of the *Celestial Empire* to arrogate a descent from Heaven itself. But we forget that there have not been wanting those who have claimed a like extravagant duration for our own ancestors. By some chroniclers Magog, the grandson of Noah, and by others Shem, have been catalogued as Saxons—veritable Saxons in "kith and kin." Lazius terms them "part of the fatal relics of Troy." Another has made Alexander their leader. He alone, in the facetious language of Turner, was worthy to have led the ancient Saxons to the field of martial honour. They are stated to have followed him to the stream of victory, and on his death, to elude the envy excited by their exploits, to have exchanged the slothful plains of the East, for the hardier soil of the Germanic continent. While others, disdaining the imputation of a *barbarian* extraction, maintain that they were "Germans, *indigenous* Germans," pre-eminent in arts and in arms, a thousand years before the Christian era, possessing "not only mind, strength, beauty and integrity, but superior mind, superior strength, superior beauty, and an integrity unparalleled in the world."

But these antiquarians, remarks the greatest of Saxon historians, whose narrow views looked only into Europe for the cradle of our ancestors, may be despised as indolent by the adventurous spirits who have made Asia and Africa the regions of their research. So indefatigable has been the activity of some that the Pontic Chersonesus has been visited, the classic Euxine navigated, Armenia traversed, and Mount Imaus approached. Wherever the chorographical polemic has turned his eye, this fairy peo-

ple has appeared. Distance has been no difficulty; impossibility no impediment; but the bleak deserts of Scythia, and the sands of Africa, have alike been presented as the birth-place of that tribe, which, in the days of Ptolemy, just darkened the peninsula of Jutland, and three inconsiderable islands in its neighbourhood.

The wild extravagance of almost all annalists of by-gone ages that are involved in the misty obscurity of uncertain tradition or unauthenticated chronicles, would seem amply sufficient to justify the celebrated Agrippa in his daring philippic against History.

The love of the marvellous which prompts to the adoption of that theory which is the most wonderful, has, likewise, been the fertile cause of many a historical vagary. Novelty, by investing an object with its own peculiar charm, never fails to draw admiration, often as transient and fleeting, however, as it is rapturous and delusive.

In the pursuit of whatever is startling or surprising, no *hypothesis* is discarded, however incredible, provided it will furnish the foundation of a new *pseudo-theory*. Leaving the patient and laborious reconciliation of the paralogism of history, as the ungenerous task of some "meaner genius," the random annalist (for historian he is not) gives full scope to the sportings of fancy and delights to expatiate amid the flowery fields of an imaginary region. No fact, however stubborn, but is made to yield before his magic transformation, no topography, however well established, but some *paralepsis* or distorted citation is discovered to obviate, no chronology that is not converted into anachronism, if it oppose his preconcerted development.

To gratify this love of "objects new and strange," the pretended language of Formosa was invented; for this, Chatterton rummaged the old muniment coffer of St. Mary Redcliffe's church, and seized with eager avidity the opportunity of converting its antique and black-letter manuscripts into the foundation of that literary and historical forgery which gave birth to the Rowley poems, and furnished materials of history for the credulous Barret—thus literally giving to "airy nothing, a local habitation and a name."

But not only do conflicting statements in history arise

from the intrinsic obscurity of the period under consideration, but even in discussing the plain and unequivocal indications which mark an age, opinions the most contrary are often pertinaciously maintained. This discrepancy arises not from the inexplicable nature of the subject, or from any inherent ambiguity in the interpretation of events: for authentic history "doth not deliver Pythian oracles."

The prime source of the disagreement has, we think, been correctly stated by one who was himself an eminent historian, and remarkably exempt from the fault he deprecated: it resides in the fact, that the effect of evidence on the mind, is as various as the perceptions and associations of individuals. We suffer our judgment to be biased by our prejudices, passions and sentiments, so that instead of beholding an event as it actually occurred, clear and uncoloured, we view it tinged with the false gloss of our own fancies, just as a distant mountain partakes the colour of the medium through which it is seen.

This propensity of our nature, which so materially affects historical accuracy, produces like distortion and misconception, in almost every branch of human pursuit. For says Bacon "men have used to infect all their meditations, opinions and doctrines with some conceits which they have most admired, or some sciences which they have most applied; and to give all things else a tincture according to them, utterly untrue and improper." The musician who asserted before Cicero, that the soul was a harmony spake as he was moved by the governing principle of his life: *Hic ab arte sua non recessit*.

The historian whose mind is warped by any characteristic idiosyncrasy is on certain subjects incapable of dispassionate judgment. Instead of perceiving the confluence of numerous causes, in effecting the ultimate state of society in any age, he can only see the agency of a single principle, according or disagreeing with the arbitrary standard which he has erected in his own mind. It has been said that men are prone, in philosophical matters, to generalize too hastily; on historical subjects they frequently generalize both too hastily and too partially; the historical sciolist vainly strives to refer every event to the predominance or downfall of some favourite dogma. A recurrence to our own observation or experience will be amply sufficient to fortify this truth.

There are times when the moral world seems to stand still—periods marked by mental inaction, when the human mind has appeared as in a state of torpor and dormancy, when knowledge has not been merely stationary but has actually retrograded. The age of feudal domination and papal supremacy, affords an illustration of this state of society, so graphically described by the quaint and sententious Harris, as the age of monkery and legends, of *Leone* verses, of projects to decide *truth* by ploughshares and battoons, of crusades to conquer infidels and extirpate heretics, of princes deposed, not as Cræsus was by Cyrus, but by one who had no armies and who did not even wear a sword. The features and character of such an age are strongly marked and accurately defined: yet whether this sad deterioration be referable to the decline and fall of the Roman empire, the corruption of the Christian religion, the suppression of freedom, or the prevalence of Aristotelian subtlety, frittering away all substantial knowledge, are questions which have long vexed and still continue to agitate the historical inquisitors.

There are other eras when the "world seems impelled towards its goal with accelerated force"—eras which have been rendered illustrious by the disenthralment of the mind from the intellectual despotism which had long held it in undisputed subjection, when men awoke from the trance of ignorance and infatuation in which they had slept for ages. Such was that period which witnessed the introduction of the Baconian philosophy, attended as it was by the brightening dawn of literature, and the amelioration of the social and political condition of mankind. Yet by what means this great re-installment of truth and reason was effected, by what bold and mighty effort the subsisting state of society was overthrown, or the vast fabric of scholastic ingenuity laid in the dust, by the promulgation of what sentiments the body politic was reinstated in its rights and privileges, are questions upon which much noisy and vexatious disputation has been expended, until at last human ingenuity seems exhausted in the formation of "fine-spun theories" for the explication of simple and seemingly unmistakable facts. One beholds in this universal "instauration of the sciences" and revival of religion and letters, nothing but the influence of one great

master-spirit moulding the sentiments and opinions of his age,—Bacon, the great hierophant of nature and revealer of her mysteries, swaying the minds of men as with the magic wand of eastern fable. Another maintaining that the man was a product of the age, and not the age of the man, as prejudice may dictate, willat tribute *all* to the diffusion of more enlarged notions of man's capability for self-government, or the inculcation of a purer Christianity *apart* from every other modifying consideration.

Or, to cite another instance of this historical perversion, no period has probably excited more discussion than that rendered so fearfully interesting by the French Revolution, none respecting which the sources of information are more copious, and none certainly, that has exerted so great an influence on subsequent times. Yet the causes to which this disastrous convulsion is to be referred are as various as the writers who have treated upon the period. The jealous monarchist beholds in this universal anarchy and disruption of society, this indiscriminate commingling of every rank and age and sex, nothing but the legitimate actings of a "fierce democratie:" while the enthusiastic republican beholds the same unsightly picture with feelings of alternating rapture and deep regret. The awful spectacle at which "humanity sickens and freedom turns pale," presents to him an exhibition of human nature in its sublimest form. Like Milton he beholds a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks—as an eagle mewing her mighty youth and kindling her endazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam. He beholds the giant-like uprising of mighty people, maddened into ferocity and in the wildness of despair, attempting by one convulsive throe to overwhelm the tyrants who oppressed and the victims of oppression in one common catastrophe.

The grand error in the instances above considered, is that instead of acknowledging a number of influences all conspiring to one general effect, the narrow-minded historian conforms the age to his sentiments, not his sentiments to the age. Intent upon exhibiting that agency alone, which has been previously conceived in his own mind, all the powers of a critical ingenuity are called into requisition, to overthrow a former

theory of causes, and establish one of his own, equally vague and partial, until finally the object of dispute, is merged into a teasing logomachy in support of peculiar sentiments and conceits. Instead of a plain and candid recital of events, history is transformed into a wrangling and disputatious clamouring in favour of national prejudices or personal predilections, rife with disquisitions which, like those of the schoolmen, may aid one's acuteness though they will fail to enlarge his knowledge. No cause probably has tended more than this to induce that *subjective* manner of modern historians, which has been contrasted with the *objective* style of the ancients.

These, then, are some of the causes which tend to weaken our confidence in the statements of historians; yet for these, *all history* is by no means to be rejected: and to preclude an inference so erroneous, we know not how we can better conclude than by quoting the sentiments of Locke, who after assigning the different degrees of assent due to human records, appends the following just though inelegant remarks: "I would not be thought to lessen the credit and use of history; it is all the light we have in many cases, and we receive from it a great part of the useful truth we have, with a convincing evidence. I think nothing more valuable than the records of antiquity; I wish we had more of them, and more uncorrupted. But *this* truth itself forces me to say that passion, interest, inadvertency, mistake of meaning and a thousand odd reasons or capricious men's minds are acted by (impossible to be discovered) may greatly invalidate human testimony."

AGRIPPINUS.

THE INFIRMITIES OF POETS.

It is a fact, which is much to be deplored by the lovers of mankind, as it is a source of wonder to the followers of the marvelous, that most of the poets, who stand pre-eminent in the ranks of the literary corps were unfortunate in their intercourse and connexions with the world, and

were troubled with more than a common share of the miseries of this life. That these misfortunes in most cases did not, and even could not, flow from gross imperfections in the original constitution of their mental and physical capacities is certain. For if they did, we would be led to believe that nature had instituted this as one of her unalterable laws, that to bestow an intellect of a high and noble order was bestowing capacities for the better reception of misfortune and miseries. A belief which would impute to her the formation of a law that is arbitrary and unjust.

Nature has only exerted her power thus far in the formation of the mind of a poetical genius. She has made it of a fine texture in order to perform its operations. A formation which is not in itself imperfect, nor would ever be felt as such, were there but erected protections for it from outward assaults.

If we will examine some of the poems of those poets who have been knighted unfortunate, it will be apparent by their refined beauties and delicate sentiments, that the instrument which formed them was itself refined and delicate; and to apply it to any unaccustomed use would insure a destruction of its temper and a diminution of its lustre. As when we see a minute piece of mechanism, we are sure that instruments were employed in its construction, which would be injured or entirely destroyed by any unusual force or unaccustomed application, so delicate would be their formation. The blows of critics and the sneers of reviewers when aimed at prose writers are harmless and uncared for, but to the minds of poets they are severe, painful and overpowering. This acute sensibility though often productive of great pain assists the mind to the conception of what is graceful, beautiful and sublime. But like the tender flower, if pressed you have before you a mangled mass of ruined mind. The life of Keats is strikingly illustrative of this fact. Though "born in a manger," he was yet so sensitive to the strictures of critics as "to be laughed out of existence by some quaint review."

That most of the unfortunate poets possessed faults both of omission and commission no one can or should deny. But they come from a fountain not naturally impure, but rendered turbid by causes which it is impossible for them

to remedy. Immured in a study and wrapped in their own bright thoughts, they find but little time for social intercourse with the world; and when brought in contact with society they are as "strangers in a foreign land," ignorant of its manners, laws and customs. Nor does the injury stop here, but they are affected in a more serious and a more important manner. For, unlike other mortals, they do not furl their wings for the present, but they seek the past and throw around it an ideal charm and a strange novelty. They portray by a high wrought fancy, persons, scenes and circumstances, which would task the old genii themselves in the zenith of their glory ever to fabricate. Then is it strange that the feelings and actions of poets are imbued with a nature partaking of the ideal, when the mind is continually overshadowed with creations so fantastic? They can no longer conceive what man and the rest of the universe are, but only what man and the rest of the universe should be. They anticipate praises and smiles and dream not of reverses in Love and Fame. Penury and want—these grim ghosts, find no habitation in their minds; and it requires an actual contact with the real world to give them sensible evidences of their existence. Then it is they find not man as expected with the noblest feelings and manliest sentiments, but devotedly attached to his own interest and far from being a fit subject for poetical inspiration. Exalted conceptions of human nature—bright anticipations—a noble mind—all, all fade, moulder and are crushed into a mournful ruin.

Was this not the case with Keats? who no doubt would have held an elevated rank among English poets had he possessed, as a back ground to the splendid colours of his mind, hereditary wealth and honours; for these would have drawn around him warm-hearted friends to sustain, console and encourage him when writhing under the inflictions of critics and the pains of physical decay. Forced at length from his native land where he "had been worm-like trampled," but not "adder-like revenged," he sought the balmy clime of Italy to find spirits congenial to his own pure and warm nature and to loosen the fangs of consumption that were fastened upon him. He gains this "lone mother of dead empires" only for his pure spirits to

——— "flow
Back to the burning fountain whence it came,
A portion of the Eternal."

The nature of Keats was too gentle to come in contact with his persecutors—those human hyenas whose every touch soiled and every breath contaminated. Worse than their bestial prototypes, they satiated their ravenous appetites with a living victim.

There are yet other poets who are not so much indebted to this gentle nature, this acute sensibility for their misfortunes as to the neglect of their moral culture in early youth. Byron, who has left a name "above all Greek above all Roman fame," mournfully illustrates this truth.

Though born to an inheritance of rank and wealth and every other facility to aid him in the pursuit of happiness, yet all of these advantages were counteracted by the baneful misfortune of his being left at an early age "lord of himself, that heritage of woe." Bereft of his father who fell a degraded victim of vice, he was left to the care of his mother—and of all the beings in the world a child is mostly dependent on the teachings of its mother for its future destiny in life—but she, instead of being a guardian angel to curb the natural impetuosity of his temper, to mould his moral faculties aright, was herself the creature of passions wild and strong, and needed more to be chastened by the principles of religion than her unfortunate offspring. The result was, that he in whose breast undoubtedly were the seeds of high and manly virtues, grew to manhood, with a soul overgrown with the wild vines of passion;—plunging into every scene of vice and dissipation, he opened in his own heart the flood-gates of sorrow, anguish and misanthropy.

Who can read his own allusion to the early neglect of his moral culture without the deepest emotions?

"Untaught in youth my heart to tame,
My springs of life were poisoned."

He who seemed destined by the Creator to act in a higher and nobler sphere than that of common mortals; he who

"With the thunder talked as friend to friend,
And wove his garland of the lightning's wing,"

was so corrupted in his whole moral nature, as at an early age to become disgusted with his own species and to long for the desert as his dwelling place. YORICK.

MEZITHE.

HEBREWS II. 17.

O thou meek and lowly one,
Christ the humble virgin's son !
Thou whose infant head was laid
Roughly where the oxen made
In the shattered stall their bed,
In the manger where they fed,
There was room for all but thee,
Thou of peerless majesty.
Thou the measure of whose years
Ages told not, thou in tears
The dark path of sorrow trod,
Thou ! incarnate Son of God !

Thou, oh weary man of scorn—
Friendless, homeless and forlorn !
Seated by Gennesaret
While around thee crowds are met—
Listening on the pebbled shore,
Wondering at the pilgrim's lore,
While the wavelets at thy feet
Murmur up their worship sweet,
And the breezes cool the cheek
Of their master faint and weak,
Tempest-tost, yet by a nod
Tempest-stilling ! Son of God !

March 4th, 1844.

Galilean oft pursued
By the Jewish demon brood !
Now in kingly triumph borne—
Wearing now a crown of thorn,
Kneeling in Gethsemane
In thy fearful agony,
Blood drops all thy temples stain,
Wrung out by thy mortal pain,
Quivering 'neath the lash, reviled,
Taunted, cursed in fury wild,
Bowing 'neath thy Father's rod—
Crucified ! oh Son of God !

Yet exalted thou on high
Glorious in thy majesty !
Wearing now thy diadem,
Rich with many a starry gem,
Seated on thy priestly throne
With a glory all thine own,
All thine earthly work well done—
All thine earthly conquest won,
Hark ! seraphic anthems swell—
"Thou hast smitten Death and Hell !
Chained them in their dark abode,
Thou ! triumphant Son of God !"

THE MUSINGS OF A DAY DREAMER.

THE labors of the Alchemist do not so much excite our wonder as the utter futility of his schemes. What—we exclaim, in all the complacency of superior wisdom—

what but the strangest infatuation could induce such unwearied toil in the pursuit of means, which only tended to subvert the very ends they were designed to accomplish. If however we look into our own breasts, we shall perhaps find there a continual struggle, carried on with the same degree of enthusiasm for the attainment of an object equally chimerical, equally hostile to our real interests. Why is man ever attempting, now by the wiles of ingenious flattery, and again by the pride which apes humility, to elicit from others a confirmation of the whisperings of self-praise? Why is he so eager to analyse the mental qualities of those whose talents are known and acknowledged? Why so careful to trace every point of resemblance between their character and his own? Does it not betray the hidden wish of his soul, a deep anxiety to discover the compass and qualities of his intellect, a desire resulting from self-love and vanity, to justify the esteem and respect with which he regards that dearest of all objects—himself? With comparative indifference, he yields his bodily imperfections to the idle joke or the passing sneer. But speak of his mental powers and he is no longer passive. Give him the slightest reason to infer that you rate his capacity above the common rank; he is your friend to the last extremity. With unsparing generosity he lavishes upon you every good quality imagination can suggest, though your honest impartiality and nice discrimination of character are objects of his peculiar admiration. Let him discover that your opinion is unfavorable, though expressed in the most qualified terms; in spite of evidence he cannot believe you candid, in spite of duty and conscience he too generally views you in the light of an enemy.

Willing as perhaps most men are to admit the accuracy of this description, yet it is one of the deceptions of self-love to persuade ourselves that these feelings spring from a different source; that we covet this knowledge believing our happiness as well as our usefulness would be promoted if we knew the real measure of our abilities. We should, then, it is urged, know what qualities to cultivate, what is within the compass and what beyond the reach of our ability. Thus could we concentrate all our energies upon their proper objects, cheered with the confident assurance of success. Plausible as such views seem, a slight exami-

nation may convince us that they are erroneous; that both our happiness and our usefulness depend upon that very uncertainty respecting our mental abilities which we are so anxious to remove.

Let us then suppose the problem solved; that to exhibit the matter in a more definite aspect by some elaborate process of induction in the science of Phrenology, man is enabled to measure his mental qualities with mathematical precision. What has he gained? what in most, if not in all cases, but a mortifying and disheartening knowledge of his own weakness? As the misshapen dwarf keenly alive to the picturesque, at the first glimpse of his reflected deformity, or the sanguine speculator in city-lots, when his eye rests upon the watery plain beneath which his hopes are buried, thus would man turn in disgust, from the contemplation of his own intellectual barrenness. A boundless ambition and an impotent mind, the living chained to the dead. But are there not, it may be asked instances in which man underrates his intellectual powers; and could any knowledge be more desirable in such cases, than that which would enable him to affix to his talents their real value? It would be far more correct (though few are guilty of this weakness) to say that he underrates his attainments. It were folly indeed to assert that any one of my readers would consider himself capable of filling the highest station in the gift of his country were he summoned to it at this moment. But we do say, and we do believe, that there is not one who thinks himself destitute of the capacity for making under proper training and suitable advantages, such acquisitions as he deems essential to the proper discharge of the duties annexed to this station. The universal feeling of man on such a subject is shown in its naked simplicity, by the answer of the peasant to the philosopher, who, when asked if he could read Greek, replied, "that he had never tried."

Nor does man in the indulgence of this feeling act on the belief that his whole race are gifted by nature with equal endowments. It is his opinion of himself, not of others, of his own possible attainments under given circumstances, which is here involved. The very last thing he thinks of in any case is to admit his unqualified inferiority. In respect to his mental qualities we say boldly,

never. To use a common phrase, men are not unwilling to level up, but ever shrink with involuntary disdain from levelling down. What other fruit or advantage then could we expect to derive from this discovery, but the depreciation in value of that which we estimate so highly, the heart's most cherished feelings deeply wounded, and our self-esteem exposed to painful humiliation? In our present scenes of trial and difficulty when shame covers the countenance, when ignominy and disgrace are for the time our sole companions, we have yet one consolation, the cheering confidence that there is a power within, "the eternal spirit of the chainless mind," free to plan and free to act, which will enable us finally to burst our fetters and to exchange our sackcloth for the garments of triumph. Who then in such a situation would ask for that knowledge whose only effect might be to strip him of this hope, however faint, the last strong anchor of his soul.

But here the question may arise, Does the man of genius also overrate his powers? Let us grant for a moment, what is extremely improbable, that he does not; still there is much room to doubt whether his happiness (to say the least) would be increased by an exact knowledge of the objects to which those powers are peculiarly adapted. Genius, we admit, supposes the ability to excel, but this is very far from implying the power of attaining universal excellence. Yet such is the influence of the feelings upon the judgment, the control of desire over belief, that men of genius are specially prone to think themselves qualified for those intellectual efforts which they most admire; provided they can find the smallest grounds on which to found their pretensions. Under the impulse of this feeling, Byron was led greatly to exaggerate his talents for oratory, and Richelieu by his ambition of the name of a poet to expose himself to universal ridicule. Instances might be multiplied. But as the traveller on the desert burning with thirst, beholds in the distance nature's sweet fountain, gushing freely, cool, and delicious, and the picture grows more vivid and more distinct as his pangs increase; so the man of genius, viewing his mental qualities through the dilating medium of desire and imagination, sees a thousand varied forms of beauty, on which he dwells in the luxury of self-complacency. Remove the mist of uncer-

tainty and how is he shocked at the tame and insipid reality. The qualities for which he most admired himself, which he worshipped as the idols of his heart, and on which he built all his schemes of future glory, stripped of their captivating drapery have faded into insignificance; and there is left to him nothing save despondency, wherewith to clothe his nakedness. To such disappointment might we justly suppose genius liable. It is a rare, precious gem, and nature, as it would seem, in a spirit of revenge, has connected with it other qualities which painfully atone for her generosity. An excessive sensibility, which yields to the slightest impulse of pleasure or pain; and a wild lawless enthusiasm which can admit no medium, are its almost inseparable attendants. Is it then possible for genius to take a view of its powers so just and accurate as to render it superior to disappointment? Does not the bare supposition involve an absurdity? As enthusiasm too is the source of all lofty aspiring hope, and sensibility the refinement of our perceptions of happiness or misery purified from every species of alloy, is it not certain, that the disappointment of genius must be far greater, its sense of anguish far more keen, than that of humbler minds.

Still it may be asked could not man indiscriminately, his judgment rectified by the supposed knowledge of his real powers, making a virtue of necessity, prosecute new schemes and form new prospects of enjoyment; would he, not knowing the exact degree of merit which he could attain attempt it with ardor and alacrity? The supposition implies a change in his very nature. Remove all doubts of success and you remove all spur to effort. The certainty of victory is the annihilation of its value. The foundation to every powerful motive to ambitious effort is the belief that we shall accomplish something that will tend to increase our self-respect. But can we rise in our own estimation when we have already calculated and measured the full amount of all it is possible for us to attain. When we know that we have but to reach forth the hand and it is ours, have we not virtually realized the greater part of the good which the object is capable of affording? But more than this will not man calling up to his mind those sources of enjoyment from which he is thus forcibly debarred, be prevented from making any valuable use of those which remain. Restrict

man's personal liberty, let the limits be ever so extensive, will not the idea of restraint be sufficient in itself to sour all his joys; banish him from his country, the home of his youth, will not imagination dwelling on the happiness from which he is excluded, destroy all relish for enjoyments perhaps intrinsically superior?

Who then would say with the hero of the Grecian bard "Give us light though we perish under its blaze"? Should we not rather venerate the wisdom which has so framed our nature that an apparent weakness proves a real advantage; that our minds unshackled by any known restrictions, are free to move at pleasure, as fancy or reason dictates; that while we are taught by the uncertainty of success to guard with the most cautious vigilance against the possibility of failure, so on the other hand the hope of realizing our loftiest conceptions inspires a courage and an ardor which bids defiance to every obstacle?

Φ. B. K.

HOFER TO HIS MEN.

Ye men of Tyrol, why around me thus
In silence stand ye, with your arms
Clasped on your breast, while black despair
Paints midnight on your brows?
Say, have the furious storms which Fate
Hath wreaked unpitying o'er our pathway, turned
Your hearts to marble? or is it those hearts,
Are brooding now with stern remembrance on
Sweet hours once here, now fled?
That happy time whose days were spent
In honest toil—and when with night you turned
Your willing footsteps home, your long-loved wife,
With eyes whose kindly light to you outshone
The hearthstone's blaze—did smile your welcome,
While clustering around, your babes
Did echo back the same with half-formed words.
Here stretched your fields
Laughing in yellow harvest: there
Waved the green wood, tempting you to chase
The antlered deer. Friends, country, homes,
Contented happiness were yours; each fruit

Its season brought, joy its hour.
Oh peaceful days! I heard the Frenchman's trumpet pour
Its war-blast thro' our land. I heard
The iron hoof of tramping kingsmen ring
Along our shepherd paths; I saw day's goodly light
Flashed back from burnished helms—
And they had fled, those pleasant days!
Say, sleepeth righteous fury in your breasts
So sound, that words are wanted that it may
Be waked to tempest! O have they not
Each, everything around, a tongue
To urge you on: have not those fields,
Wasted by hostile force, your burning homes,
Your ravished wives, your murdered babes,
Your thousand wrongs, O have they not a voice
To peal in thunder sound that charge—
On Tyrolese!
Doth not the ground we tread with blood bedewed,
Rich blood, by Austrian sabres shed,
Cry out for vengeance on our foe?
O, we can ne'er forget that day, that dreadful day,
When down in yonder glen, we, prest
By trebly trebled numbers, strove
With dripping blades back from our breast to hurl
The wave on wave of raging hate that rolled
With oft repeated dash to overwhelm
Our puny force—when hot, red blood,
That once round noble hearts did bound—
Life giving—then in purple stream did flood
The trampled plain, rippling the rocks among
O, bravely battled ye, and though overpowered,
Yet now are we unconquered as
When we did first draw sword.
And shall we once again attempt the strife?
What else is left us? where else can we turn?
The past is red with blood; the present worse,
Then, sword in hand, alone we can
Unto the future pass.
Ye men of Tyrol, hear me say I know,
That conquest waits, I know the hour is near
When we shall be avenged. Lo hear me!
I demand will once more.
With heart by heart, and side by side attempt
To war in justice, virtue, freedom's cause?
Ha well I know your answer, for I see
Eyes that do sparkle, lips together prest,
In firm intent. Aye from their sheath your swords
Ye do full well to draw, for sooth I know—
That ye with me have sworn, that Liberty,
Alone is life, and while as slaves
Heaven is a funeral pall and earth a grave.

MANLY SENSIBILITY.

SENSIBILITY is a principle of the heart which lies too deep to be exhibited to the gaze of the world. It is modest and retiring; it finds its enjoyments, not in commotion and strife, nor in diminishing the happiness of others, but it draws its pleasures from its own emotions, and loves to dwell in solitude and silence. True sensibility is, nevertheless, an essential ingredient of the manly character, however delicate the hue it may throw over the masculine virtues. The power to feel is, indeed, a sweet boon of nature, a power full of loveliness, and yet full of strength, delicate, yet firm, a nicely adjusted balance which, though sensitive to the slightest touch, may be the arbiter of stern justice. It is modest, because it would not be obtrusive. It loves to feed upon its own emotions, not from self-love and vanity, but because of the real purity and intrinsic worth of its good affections. It seeks solitude and silence, not because it hates or cannot enjoy society, but that it may expand itself, and revel in its own feelings with freedom, and that its own exquisite harmonies may not be disturbed by the noisy discord of a jarring world. This beautiful faculty is not an acquired one, it cannot be found by searching the world. It is innate with every one, and there are none to complain that Providence has withheld from them this precious gift. Some there are indeed, who seem to have been disinherited of this treasure of the heart, but they are poor because they have impoverished themselves; they have chilled their affections by indifference and frivolity, or neglected them in the absorbing cares of ambitious pursuits. How important is it then that we protect this feeling from the blight of worldliness, since it is born with us, and that the germ be nurtured even in the first stages of life. The fountain of true sensibility, is seated in high and pure affections; and infancy and early youth, are peculiarly the appropriate seasons for the cultivation of these affections. It is from the exuberance of good feelings, and his uninterrupted innocent contentment that the child draws that strength of heart, which is to sustain him in riper years. The milk of human kindness is the nourishing food of his

infancy. What mother is there that does not notice with joy the first buddings of sensibility in her tender infant, even when it has not learned to express its emotions by words, but only by that language which is read in its laughing face.

"Its merry eyes, with sparkling laughter bright,
Its every limb, declaring wild delight.

What mother that does not feel a sacred joy when her child first gives tokens of recognition, and clasps her neck, with innocent and real affection; and after its tender infancy is past, how carefully does she watch the development of heart and mind, lest its yet delicate sensibilities may be usurped by self-love, and the pride of growing intelligence, and the young heart be shut out from the Eden of its pleasures, by exulting in the taste of forbidden knowledge. Home is the nursery of sensibility. In the happy family circle the finer sentiments of the heart are cherished, under the mild excitement of the domestic affections, the respectful friendship of child and parent, the disinterested lively attachment of brother and sister. In these quiet walks, the generous emotions of the soul have room to expand, and become fixed, before the passions of youth have come into play and established their empire in the heart. The susceptibility of impressions, the delicate perception of beauty, the nice sense of what is due to ourselves and to others, which are included in the sensibility of which we speak, exert a powerful influence over the character and happiness of the possessor. By them he is rendered more amiable, and more engaging; more successful in acquiring friends, and in supporting the relations of social life more happy. By preventing him from low pursuits and brutal pleasures, they will keep the fountain of refined sentiment open in his breast, and will preserve him from that corruption of heart and life, which poisons the very well-springs of peace, and converts the memory of the past into a waste of gloomy recollections. By awakening in his bosom deep and holy emotions, it excites the aspirations of his heart after something purer than the things of earth; they will direct his eye upward to heaven, and if he yield him to their gentle ministry they will guide him thither, and open to his spirit the portals of the upper

court. Sensibility discloses to man in the works of nature sources of pleasure, which to the soulless trifler are sealed fountains. The man of true sensibility derives satisfaction from every part of the creation, in contemplating the simplest flower, the humblest insect and the minutest crystal. On the one hand, the savage or the man of sluggish intellect and deadened sensibilities scarcely cares for the extent of the creation, feels no new emotions in contemplating the worlds which astronomy reveals in the stars of night, derives no pleasure as he stands upon the shores of the ocean, and sees it slumbering quietly as a peaceful lake, or (like a strong man arousing from his sleep, and shaking his giant frame,) lashing itself into fury, while on the other hand, the man of true sensibility, feels new thrills of pleasure stealing through his soul at every fresh exhibition of beauty or sublimity.

Love, the offspring of sensibility, is at the same time the support of its parent. It is here that sensibility unfolds itself in all its beauty. It is at this fountain, that the soul drinks in a new inspiration to carry it through life. It is here that the man develops his firmer qualities, for it is here that life opens before him, and calls for their exercise; his dependence throughout infancy and youth, though the source of the most lasting benefits and the sweetest pleasures, was the dependence of a child upon its parent, a dependence however pleasing still involuntary, but he has himself formed a tie which is to last forever, which calls for the exercise of every manly feeling his youth has imbibed, which really re-creates him a man. And yet, in the world, a feeling so pure, so sacred, is a theme for jest and ridicule; and its parent, sensibility, is called the weakness of a sickly brain. But away with these perverted notions. Let us not be ashamed of that, which is the immediate order of providence, the offspring of heaven. What is it to live if it is not to love? The most touching forms of sensibility are seen in benevolence and pity. Inactive sensibility begets a sombre melancholy, confined too long to its own circle of emotions; it exhausts itself in solitary pleasure and begets a selfishness which can never be at ease with itself. But active benevolence gives it a new life by employing it in constantly varying scenes, and insures to it the satisfying reminiscence of good done to others. True sensibility then is always charitable; and pity,

"Dropping soft, the sadly pleasing tear."

What more beautiful among the feelings of humanity? What more becoming the manly character? What generous soul does not enjoy a pure delight in sympathising with misfortune? It is a mild, perhaps melancholy, feeling, and though caused by unhappiness, this very feeling is itself a pleasure, given as it would seem by a wise Providence, as a consolation for the pain inflicted by his chastening hand. How charming that sensibility which can draw even from the bitter pains of life the sweets of happiness. How wonderful that power which can thus indefinitely multiply its own enjoyments. Hast thou ever felt the mournful pleasure, or dost thou think all this but vain philosophy. Look thou upon real life, see the misery of one creature, and if thou hast a soul pity and relieve him; then if in that soul there is one spark of manly feeling, thou wilt have a sweet and virtuous consciousness which will turn thy very tears to rapture. Cherish then that sensibility, which, however mild and soft, however melancholy, exalts and invigorates the soul. In prosperity let not your heart sink into indifference or selfishness, but let it expand in the warmth of gratitude and love. In darker hours keep alive that peace of soul which proves, "how sweet are the uses of adversity." In short, cherish that true sensibility which with a true philosophy drinks in pleasures, pure and heavenly, from every source which the Creator has placed within his reach, which

"Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything."

MISSION.

CIVILIZATION differs from Uncivilization more perhaps than is usually supposed. This is undoubtedly owing not to the want of glaring dissimilarity, but to the indifference with which the subject is too often regarded.

Habitude to the laws of cultivated, organised society, as now in force, deadens the conception as to the state of

that portion of the world where these laws are as yet unenacted. Accustomed to view man as clothed, educated and in a certain sense perfect, the unclothed, the uneducated, and the in every sense imperfect condition of the same being when uncivilized is very indistinctly beheld. To the refined native of an enlightened land, the rude Heathen is thought of as the inhabitant of a distant rock-bound Kamschatka-like island; brutal, heartless, the incurable degradation of his body, only equalling that of his mind; and as thus is commiserated with what is but too often a vague pity. In fact there is in the mind, when applied to the subject, a horror of the savage: the matted locks, shameless nudity and brutal propensities which are his characteristics, disgust because offensively obvious to the senses. There is a recoiling from brotherhood with the Caffre because the soul is so dimly evident through the flesh, that an unadmitted doubt exists whether he be in reality a man, or only a man-like brute. An idea of the savage, at once vivid and true, can only be received by actual contact, plain vision. Heathendom is, however, for the most part, so difficult of entrance, and so little attractive when entered, that the traveller prefers treading other paths than those leading through its tangled wildernesses. The vast forests of Africa, as an instance, teem with inhabitants; the luxuriance of its tropical foliage enveloping from the sight of enlightened Europe myriads of human existences, each of whom is as distinctly and individually a man as any of those without.

Broad rivers, whose sluggish surface the keel has never divided, whose thick-grown banks the axe has never cleared, encincture with liquid girdles the region within. Rugged mountains raise their volcanic battlements to wall out the foreigner, and to wall in the native denizen. Although the light of civilization blaze, all-illuminating, throughout Christendom, its rays fall but feebly through the darkness of Heathendom; for the most part serving only to show the massive nature of its boundaries, and the thick cloud, hanging heavily, impenetrably, over its doomed region. This is not the language of sentimental affectation. The larger portion of the earth is shrouded in darkness, all figures of speech aside. A darkness tenfold darker than that caused by the absence of light, when the earth lies

between us and the sun. A real darkness does brood in midnight over the mind of the heathen, and consequently over his soul. But as the mind reveals itself in the external appearance of the man, let it be first seen how the feebleness of the mind does, in this case appear as evident in the bodily condition of the unenlightened. And here it is admitted, be it observed, that there are grades of degradation in the savage state ; but in this view the aggregate is taken, and the broad principle condensed as personified in one. Taking then Heathenism as a distinct principle, it is singular to mark its almost unvarying oppositeness to what is held noble and good in Christianity ; that believed elevating and manly in the one, is in the other inverted into that which is held debasing and despicable. As an instance, political liberty, all-recognized in the one, is in the opposite wholly unknown. Despotism, requiring as it does, no mind whatever in the multitude, abhorred in Christian lands, predominates in the unchristian. One, combining in himself the judicial and executive power, dispenses with all tribunes and legislation whatever. Slaves of a slave are these. Let a glance be cast at the exercise of the social duties as they exist in the wild, unorganized society of the heathen. Elsewhere, in this point of view most especially, the tenderest and most god-like principles of man are manifested, and are expected as things of nature.

Here still does the Caffre retain his inversion to all that is lovely and human. Parental affection of all the most natural and endearing, how does it exist in the savage breast ? All who have examined the subject attest the universality of infanticide throughout Heathendom. The mother, unhindered, nay applauded, murdering her offspring in the most convenient way if she be so inclined. In the converse relation of child to parent, this fearful deviation from the natural affections no less exists. Does an infirm parent weary his child by his continued life, he is haled to the nearest solitude and there deserted to starvation. But let us venture no farther into the detail of inhuman cruelties which mark the every-day life of the savage. Few are the instances in which love, apart from sensuality, exists, and without the exercise of this influence what can be looked for but the deepest degradation. The morning dawns upon him issuing from slumber into a

condition, in a mental point of view, but little different. Its employments consist in providing against hunger, or in protecting the body against assault. There is not a muscle exerted, but for the peculiar benefit of self; the great business being to exist—to prolong life, and beyond this there is no thought. If peace be between him and his neighbour he roams the forest, and as chance is, battles with the wild beast crossing his path—the victor in either case devouring the conquered. If it be a time of war, then alone does he awake from his bestial inertness into a kind of life—mad fury bursting forth out of the languid inanity of peace, he becomes in comparison noble, but it is the nobleness of a fiend. Thus, a brute in peace, and a demon in war; undergoing a process of mere vegetation in rest, or reeking with slaughter in action, he passes his day, living in as exact accordance to blind nature, as even the half-crazed Jean Jacques himself could desire. Joy and pain, hope and despair, all sensual.

Thus is the Caffre to the eye; but revolting to the senses as is his outward brutality, disgusting as is his bodily appearance, animal as are his occupations, brutelike as he is in every respect, there remains yet a far worse feature of this man unmentioned. What has been said are as to the fearful effects, but now let the cause be seen. Is not the unenlightened mind the cause of these degraded actions? Is not the outward state but a sure index of the inner?

The mind of the Caffre, the heathen? alas, so faint are its manifestations; so inarticulate are its utterances, that one is almost fain to doubt whether it really exists; whether in this earthlike, and in every respect earthward being, there really and truly exists a living Soul. But this heathen is a man, one of the human brotherhood; and though he stands there so very helpless, in his mental faculties, gazing so dimly into the world without, through his tangled hair; his eyes, except when illumined with anger, so entirely without expression, yet he has a mind within him, although its powers are rusting away in idleness and inaction, yet it is there undeveloped, undistinguished as are the faculties of his soul yet to the most minute of them they have an existence, though but a feeble one. Rude, chaotic and unformed does the intellect

exist in the breast of him, awaiting the creative power which shall educe harmonious order from the, at present, unsymphonical disorder. That the mind is in this disordered state, the actions it prompts fully prove. Love; the heavenliest attribute of man, as expressed in its triple form of parental, filial and marital relations, has, as was seen in this case, but a feeble existence. The, in other conditions, clear radiance of mutual affection gleams here but feebly. Here again is this inversion of heathenism apparent, the fiend-like passions exult triumphant in him, Anger, Hatred, Revenge, Envy—the whole catalogue blaze forth in terrible distinctness, while Remorse, the inversion continued, lurks almost entirely latent. The love of the beautiful slumbers in the inmost recesses of this dark soul; the combined loveliness of earth and the visible heaven unfolding itself unheeded to the brutish Caffre. But inversely, he disregarding the sublimely beautiful manifest in the world above, lies quailed to earth, if its storm-clouds flash their lightnings in dangerous proximity. It exceeds all limits to describe a semi-soulless man as is the heathen; and the painting of his condition, were he raised from this his darkness to light, is equally a boundless theme. To those who cannot feel within themselves the greatness of such a change, the description would be useless. How noble the work of raising the Caffre, the heathen from the earth to the enjoyments of civilization, which is a heaven in the comparison! If the mind be in itself incomprehensibly noble, is it not as noble to create such an existence from the thick darkness now enveloping it, to light, from inertness to full action? If the universe be unbounded around us in its grandeur and magnificence, it is truly a grand work, that of arousing a mind to a perception of its so glorious a grandeur. Here slumbers a man, a brother, in death-like sleep, while around him far away into the unbounded roll myriads of mighty worlds, the whole suffused in light; is it not noble to lay the hand upon the slumberer, and, wearisome as his task may be, to awake him, place him on his feet, unbandage his eyes and let him gaze? It is a task that will amply repay the exertion. It is something god-like, something, with reverence be it spoken, approaching the creative faculty of the Alone Omnipotent. Could but a just appreciation of his wonders around us

be obtained, could a proper idea of the full powers of an active living soul be felt, could a just sense of the deep degradation of such slumber pressing down a brother man be known, surely the gloriousness of his work would blaze around it in a glory far exceeding that around all the crowns and jewelled tiaras of earth, wreathed into one.

But there is yet remaining one consideration unmentioned which increases a thousand fold the nobleness of the task, and to the Christian more especially this consideration is addressed. If our God be the Source, the Essence of Light, is not the mind of the heathen unilluminated by his presence truly dark? If the contemplation of the Divine attributes be infinitely soul-elevating, is not the mind ignorant of him almost infinitely ignorant? If it be the noblest act man is capable of, the adoration of the True God, is not the Caffre truly degraded, not worshipping him? But worse still; if the worship of the Only True be thus noble, how does the brutal prostration of the heathen to fancifully carved stocks appear? How strong the evidence this bears to the fact of their extreme mental darkness, that thus is personified their idea of the Supreme Being; conception of the unseen, being with them at once feeble and inarticulate. If then all knowledge be comprised in natural and spiritual science, they destitute of both are utterly ignorant, and consequently, with the exception of sensual, utterly destitute of happiness. This being so, if there be a nobleness in raising a being from so low a state, and throwing open to it a universe of grandeur; if there be merit in arousing to full exercise, mighty though dormant energies, and awakening a living soul from vacuity into life and happiness, then the labour of the man attempting it, is noble, is meritorious. Lastly; if it be honourable beyond conception, to be the means of presenting Infinite Deity to one ignorant, to point the way of eternal happiness to one otherwise gorging on sensual; if in fact, it is a work of exceeding reward to unfold to a brother man not only the glory of his visible, but also the infinitely greater glory of the invisible world, then is this an honourable, then is this a desirable work.

The missionary therefore, is a hero in the highest acceptation of the term; and his work such, that to enter upon it, an archangel might gladly expand his wings, and fly rejoicing in his high commission.

ELOQUENCE.

WHEN we take a retrospect of the arts and sciences, both in their infancy and in their gradual course of progressive improvement, we notice a great disparity between the literary and scientific acquisitions of different eras of the world's history. In one age or country we behold the human intellect employing its mighty powers in extending the conquest of mind over matter, by directing its onward march to the discovery of new and important truths in the arts and sciences; and in another we find it infected with a fatal apathy, or clogged with an imponderable mass of superstition and error. We also learn that certain branches of learning attain a higher degree of perfection in some countries than in others; hence we conclude that there obtains a locality of perfection in every country for some one or more of the departments of knowledge. This is true of every branch of polite learning, for, with few exceptions, there does not exist in the whole range of the arts and sciences, at the present age of intellectual superiority a single subject which has not in some one country attained the summit of ideal excellence.

This principle of locality is most remarkably exhibited in the rise and progress of eloquence. There exists, it is true, a species of oratory in every country variously modified by national peculiarities, but that pure and exalted eloquence which harmonizes, widens and sublimates the heart, while it confers immortality upon the possessor, selects her habitation with studious care. The genius of eloquence, too ethereal in its nature to survive the chilling blasts of despotism, wings its flight to more favoured climes, where the blessings of civil freedom are enjoyed, and weds the genius of liberty. Elder Greece, that "gifted land," the birth-place of all that is excellent and worthy of imitation in the arts and sciences, has also given to the world her perfect models of eloquence. But in what era of her history did she exhibit her brilliant galaxy of orators? Was it after her subjugation to a foreign power, when the last faint spark of Grecian liberty was extinguished and her people timid slaves? No, it was in her brightest, palmiest days, when she stood alone, isolated as

it were from all the other nations of the earth, yet radiating the genial rays of science and philosophy to the farthest confines of the civilized globe, when the Athenian people lived under the administration of wise and equitable laws and enjoyed the blessings of civil liberty. No age, before or since, has been more auspicious for the cultivation of eloquence, none has presented a wider field for oratorical distinction. But, unfortunately for Athens, this brightest period in her history was of comparatively short duration; public virtue soon became corrupted: the arts and sciences suffered a rapid deterioration; the minds of the people were sunk into a state of careless indifference to their dearest interests, in fine everything augured a speedy dissolution. Then it was that the magic eloquence of Demosthenes was wielded in defence of Grecian liberty. His orations against Philip of Macedon are masterpieces of composition, and were eminently calculated to arouse the drooping energies of his countrymen. With an intimate knowledge of the Athenian character, he left no artifice untried, by which to excite within their breasts a sense of the impending calamity. He reasoned, he entreated, he exhorted with them, he pictured to their imaginations with soul-stirring eloquence that hideous monster, Tyranny, and exerted his giant powers in attempting to arouse their national pride. But his noble efforts were ineffectual. The leaven of destruction had worked its way into the very vitals of the state, and dissolution was unavoidable. What a sublime spectacle was here exhibited to the astonished gaze of the world! a citizen patriot and orator struggling against unalterable fate, to sustain the tottering fabric of civil freedom by the unaided power of eloquence; and resolved that if "fall it must" it should overwhelm him in the ruin. The massy fabric did fall, and the man, who would alone have conferred dignity and importance on the Athenian character, died an ignominious death in the hands of his enemies. Grecian liberty perished simultaneously with the genius of eloquence; twin sisters by birth, they were rocked in the same cradle in infancy, and nourished by similar food in maturity; the very existence of the one, depended upon the purity and vigour of the other: hence, when liberty expired, eloquence was wrapt in the same funeral pall, and received into the same

sepulchre. How forcibly does the degenerate condition of modern Greece impress upon the mind the important truth that free institutions cannot be permanently preserved unless they are under the guardian protection of eloquence. The banks of the Illissus have long since ceased to echo with the voice of learning. The Lyceum, the Garden, and the Portico no longer disseminate the exhaustless treasures of erudition and science among an enlightened and happy people. The painter, the sculptor, and the statuary no longer ply their respective arts. The voice of eloquence is hushed. The precepts of a divine philosophy are no longer expounded to ardent votaries of science, and although "'tis Greece we see, 'tis living Greece no more."

Another era in the world's history has been wonderfully prolific in oratorical merit, and that too, in an age and country where the sun of liberty shone with unvaried lustre. This age gave birth to the immortal Cicero; a name celebrated in the annals of eloquence and human liberty. As long as the glory of the imperial city shall resound in our ears; as long as there exists a single votary of learning, who can appreciate the richness, melody, and impressiveness of true eloquence; so long will the orations of Cicero maintain an exalted pre-eminence in letters. The torch of Roman eloquence burned with a constant and brilliant flame; illuminating the world for a short time, but when liberty and virtue had departed, it dwindled into insignificance, leaving all Europe in tenfold darkness.

In modern times the genius of eloquence has taken up her abode almost exclusively in England, Ireland and America. The names of Pitt, Fox, Burke, Curran, Sheridan in the old world, and Marshall, Ames, Henry, Hamilton in the new, will ever be associated with the cause of liberty and human happiness, and their orations regarded as distinguished models of eloquence in future ages, wherever the English language prevails.

That eloquence which I would designate as the guardian protector of free institutions, is not the arrogant, vain, presumptuous, species of oratory, prompted by pride, passion, and self-esteem, which aims at fixing the attention upon rhetorical display, and all the "pomp and pageantry of speech," but rather that chaste, dignified, and impressive eloquence whose handmaid is reason, whose object is truth,

and whose success depends upon the purity of public virtue. The distinguished orator "is a noble of nature's own creating," his is the only "universal monarchy" worth possession. The haughty tyrant may exercise his much vaunted dominion over the bodies of his menials; the sculptor and painter may claim a supremacy over, and regulate the taste of an age, but the orator can boast a higher, more exalted sovereignty; it is his peculiar province to direct the reason and judgment of mankind, and sway the most exalted attributes of human nature. The poet or artist may accomplish the beautiful, but to be truly sublime; to carry the truth with force and effect into the inmost recesses of the human heart; to regulate the opinions and judgment of men; to draw forth the spontaneous applause of crowded assemblies; to maintain the purity of public virtue, constitute some of the distinguishing characteristics of genuine eloquence.

When we consider the nature of oratory, as well as the particular state of society which is best adapted to its cultivation, we cannot but conclude that our own land is destined soon to become the grand theatre for the display of modern eloquence. Indeed every thing seems ripe for such a result. We live under a republican government, the purest in the world, where the avenues which lead to power and station are open to all; where true merit and distinguished worth inevitably lead to distinction; where each citizen is a member of the body politic, and deeply interested in the welfare of the state. We live in a land of civil liberty, where free institutions depend for their purity and vigour on the virtue and intelligence of the people. How then, I would ask, is it possible that all these circumstances can fail to raise up in our midst a noble band of orators whose eloquence shall at least equal the most distinguished models of antiquity? Symptoms of a growing interest to attain perfection in this noble art are already visible, and even at the present day we are not without numerous examples of genuine American eloquence. Would that this spirit of improvement might go on increasing until every court room and legislative hall throughout the length and breadth of our land resounds with her magic strains. When that long expected and eventful day shall come, there will have risen up in our midst many a distinguished son of eloquence "whose

noble mind is filled with inbred worth unborrowed from his kind," and whose great delight shall be to live

"In the service of mankind to be,
A guardian god below."

But if ever the stream of public virtue shall become corrupted at the fountain head, and carry its impure waters "through each member of the embodied state." If ever corruption raise her hydra head in our land, and desecrate the fair fabric of liberty, as a last resort we must lean for protection on the mighty arm of eloquence: if it fail to carry conviction to the minds of our people, and arouse them to a true sense of their danger, then truly our condition is hopeless. Our much boasted liberty, obtained at so dear a ransom, and guarded with such watchful vigilance, will depart hence to return no more forever.

EDITORS' TABLE.

We regret the inauspicious period at which this issue of the Monthly makes its appearance. We would have it come to you, reader—the messenger of quiet, mellowing thoughts—when you are good humoured and peaceable and not, an unseasonable visitor, in the midst of one of those periodical annoyances, which make the sum total to the ills of a session. Still the bare novelty will claim for it some sort of a reception, and give it a brief place in your sterner reflections. Actuated by such a prompting doubtless, you have turned to this department—for the voice of the oracle, which at the last time of response, was dumb.

The fruits of our editorial labours which are in your hands, we shall not discuss with you; they are the choicest of the mass before us. As little, also—though in this connection it would seem unavoidable—shall we dilate upon the character and prospects of your Magazine—whether, or no, it be a fair exponent of the literary talent of Nassau Hall. We would most sedulously forbear to speak lightly of the tenure, by which the Monthly holds its claim to the affections of its readers. To those who stand among the rejected and therefore abuse it, anything would be useless; yet to those who are querulous for more varied and attractive matter and less of the studied, axiomatic graveness, which is now the tone of the Monthly, we must, both respectfully suggest *our* entire guiltlessness, and call upon them for their co-operation in elevating it and giving to it a livelier aspect.

But 'the Table'? Spare us from anything like a specific elegy over this mass of dead ideas. Peace to their *ashes*! We have no wish to disturb them. Rather, with a gentle hand, let us crush away the dreams of these hopeful aspirants. In the midst of our editorial anxieties they have been to us not the least of our comforters. We cannot forego the bestowment of a mite of the plea-

sure they have afforded us. Here, for instance, is a "Truth Seeker" who has exhausted himself in a long elaborate argument, to adjust the two-fold maternity of a hapless chicken, which, but for his humane endeavours, must have remained motherless in the midst of contending claims—a question, he affirms, "at the solution of which both Bacon and Bentham were stumped." All we can do for him is, to commend the becoming diffidence of his approach to his subject, and to applaud the zeal and masterly skill, with which, after an intensely acute train of reasoning, he flourishes in upon his triumphant conclusion. . . . We shall advert to but one other brilliant effort—a 'Tale of Misfortune,' the purport of which seems to be, the distressing adventures of a favourite of the writer's, whom he laments with the true poetry of feeling. The reader shall have the opening of the denouement; he can readily detect the foreshadowing of some kind of a catastrophe in the following,

Such was the night! yet even then there sat

Lurking hard by, an evil spirit—

Lo! a large, full-orbed, ravenous Thomas-cat

Stole out cautiously, and on a sudden stood,

Gazing, as if he'd slept o'er since his kittenhood

And now the world was all a strange garret!

Reader—we have finished our task. We linger at the threshold to leave with you a parting word of encouragement and of sympathy. The enigmas which are shadowed about our spiritual existence—the soul and her destiny; that far, unknown eyrie whence she sprang, and lighted upon this world-wreck, drifting on in the great ocean, then sprang again into the unknown—that solemn march of the great human brotherhood, to which for a little time we join our footsteps and then are suddenly found no more—that long succession of human achievements which lie behind us, and the unbounded unpossessed regions before us—these are the far-reaching themes, which impress upon us the dignity of our being—the holy and beautiful work which is allotted to us, with the rest of a vast assemblage of co-workers, in the onward progress of our race. Our faces are to the far future. The past is ours—with its martyrdoms and prayers and tears for the truth's sake. There are good and brave spirits which have grappled long and manfully with the difficulties that on every side arrested their grasp. Amidst the colossal rubbish of shattered, magnificent systems they have sat down and wept, and laid in their graves without hope. And now we see them seated, in history, upon thrones—blind old poets and hoary sages—like the white-robed elders in the holy vision. But where, O where is the last barrier—the last goal of triumph? Here in this narrow segment of eternity—the past, the realized past, one mighty enigma; the future, the unrealized future, the solution—we stand between the silence of both, with the riddle of human existence unsolved. History from the stillness of the past speaks not—but points to the mystery of her great scroll as it slowly unravels, line by line, now a little and then a little, whilst the years gather and age is added unto age; and faith from the stillness of the future speaks not—but, bending from the golden threshold of Paradise, beckons onward—onward.